



SOONER STAR NEWS

Central Oklahoma Section of The Mercedes-Benz Club of America

President's Message



Here it is early October and fall has arrived but the question remains where did summer go?? Fall in Oklahoma is a great time and the top down weather is still with us so make the best of

the season – get the top down and enjoy because before we know it the cold weather will arrive. For those of you who chose a hardtop then open the windows and/or sunroof and let the cool wind refresh you.

October will usher in the newly elected Board of Directors and Officers so do your part to support these members and volunteer to assist with events, projects and meetings. It takes the entire club to make it great so do your part to insure we have the best club and great experiences for all.



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2015 Mercedes-Benz AMG GT

Board of Director's Election Results

Following nine candidates were elected by the Membership for a two-year term October 01, 2014 to September 30, 2016:

Ed Hoag
Bobbye Van Horn
Masood Khan
Jeff Leatherrock
Greg Morgan
Bill Nash
Paul Rodesney
Mary Williams
Charles Woods

New Officers

The newly elected Board of Director's at the Board meeting on October 4, 2014, elected the following officers for a two year term November 01, 2014 to October 31, 2016.

President: Charles Woods
Vice President: Bill Nash
Secretary: Masood Khan
Treasurer: Ed Hoag

Welcome New Members

Joel Hendrix-OKC
Cory Fenity-Warr Acres
Owen Grimes-Transfer from Lone Star Section



MBCA – Central Oklahoma Section

2014 CHRISTMAS PARTY EVENT

Our High Lite Social Gathering of the Year

Date: Tuesday, December 16, 2014

Time: Cash Bar at 6:30 – Dinner at 7:30

Location: THE PETROLEUM CLUB

100 North Broadway (Chase Building), Oklahoma City, OK 73102, 35th Floor – OG&E Room. **Recommended parking** is in the Santa Fe Plaza Garage on E. K. Gaylord Boulevard, immediately east of the Chase Building.

Menu Selections: Choice of: 8oz Steak Filet, Poached Salmon or Chicken w/Artichoke Mushroom Sauce. All Entrees Include Twice Baked Mashed Potatoes & Vegetables, Chocolate Pyramid Cake w/Chocolate Sauce & Fresh Berries, Coffee, Tea, Rolls & Butter.

Fixed Price: \$50.00 per person

Reservations: Please mail a check, payable to MBCA Central Oklahoma Section with your Entrée selection(s) by no later than December 11, 2014 to:

Ed Hoag, Treasurer

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A candid Talk with Mr. Tom Davis, General Manager Mercedes-Benz of OKC

By: Masood Khan

On a Friday morning in September, I had the privilege to sit down with Mr. Tom Davis, General Manager of Mercedes-Benz of Oklahoma City, in his office for a candid talk about happenings at the dealership.

MK: What is your perspective on the new Mercedes-Benz models?

Tom Davis: Two very significant things are happening - *fuel efficiency and pricing*. With the 2016 deadline for new **Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE)** fast approaching fuel efficiency is the name of the game. Mercedes is putting more four-cylinder engines with turbo and superchargers and in some cases both. The horsepower is going up and so is the fuel efficiency.

After arrival of the new GLA on September 15th, and the new C, CLA and GLK already in place, Mercedes will have four models starting around \$40,000.00. The electric B class is already on sale, and a bigger and more luxurious E class is in the making.

MK: What is new at MBOKC that you would like the customers and MBCA Members to know?

Tom Davis: The dealership has invested in a brand-new computerized car wash, a highly sophisticated Cisco telephone system, and is working on paperless operations.

We were having some serious issues with the car wash. I was at a NADA meeting where they had multiple car washes set up for demonstration and sales. We saw this car wash and were impressed with its performance, and at almost a half a million dollars it is on the expensive side, but worth every penny. It is fully computerized and highly efficient. It turns the dirtiest of cars into spotless and shiny vehicles in a matter of minutes, and has the capacity to wash 300 cars a day.

Our new telephone system, in conjunction with our customer database, identifies the caller and displays that customer's automobile records on the service advisor's computer screen before he even answers the phone. In case the service advisor is not on his/her station, the call is automatically transferred to his/her cellphone with all the information. This telephone system will eliminate wastage of time both for the customers and our employees.

The dealership is heading towards paper free environment and right now the financial department is using iPads to do all the sales contracts. A customer does all the necessary documentation on an iPad while seated in the lounge. Once they complete it, the financial officer gets the digital copy of all the information and is ready for the customer to sign the sales agreement and complete the transaction.

Very soon a cashier will be located right in the service drive, which will expedite and streamline line the checkout process in the service department.

MK: What is the future direction/outlook for the brand and MBOKC?

Tom Davis: Here at MBOKC all the emphasis is on "Customer Experience Index" (CEI) and "Customer Satisfaction." When our customers leave the dealership we want them to be extremely satisfied and their automobiles in a better condition than when they came in.

Without any doubt, I tell you the future of both the Mercedes-Benz brand and Mercedes-Benz of Oklahoma City is very bright. I see nothing but progress.

On behalf of SSN and myself, I am extremely thankful to Mr. Tom Davis and various members of his team for spending a great deal of time with me for this segment.



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* MSRP for a 2014 C250 Sport Sedan excludes all options, taxes, title, registration, transportation charge and dealer prep. Options, model availability and price may vary. See dealer for details.
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Fall Overnight Western Oklahoma Tour October 25 and 26, 2014.

Eastern Oklahoma Section is planning a Drive to western Oklahoma, and our Central Oklahoma Section has been invited to join in on the fun. The Clubs will drive through the Red Rock Canyon State Park, then to Weatherford for lunch at Lucille's Roadhouse. After lunch it will be on to the Stafford Air & Space museum for a guided tour, then west to Clinton for a tour of the Route 66 Museum. Many in the group will spend the night at the Hampton Inn in Clinton and have dinner at Montana Mike's.

Central Oklahoma drivers can meet up with the Tulsa group at the Love's Truck Stop at I-40 exit 101 (junction of US 281) between 10:30 & 10:45 on Saturday morning.

On Sunday, the 26th, the group will head north out of Clinton to near Freedom to the Alabaster Caverns, the largest natural gypsum cave in the world. Those wishing to tour the cavern (a 45 minute tour) should wear comfortable walking shoes and a light jacket. The tour is a ¾ mile walk with stair steps throughout and is therefore is not recommended for those with mobility or respiratory problems, heart conditions or claustrophobia. Those not touring the caverns can spend the time in the gift shop and visiting. After Alabaster Caverns the drive will go through the Glass (Gloss) Mountains on the way back to Enid for lunch. Afterwards the EOK folks will head back to Tulsa.

If you wish to join in with our EOK friends in all or part of this tour, call Ron Hardage before October 20th at 918-364-3838. He must have a head count for the tours and restaurants.

Hotel Information: A block of rooms (half king beds & half 2 queen beds) has been arranged at the Hampton Inn in Clinton, for arrival on Oct. 25th and departure the 26th. Room rate is \$105 plus tax. Travelers will need to make their own reservations, before October 17th, by calling 580-323-4267. Be sure and tell them you are with the Mercedes-Benz Club from Tulsa.



Thanks! Bud



The Board of Directors awarded a Certificate of Recognition to Bud Norman to express our appreciation of his many years serving the Central Oklahoma Section as Advertising Chair. Bud said that he really enjoyed visiting with our advertisers.

Bud and Shari joined the Section in November 1995 and both have been very active supporters of the Section. Both Bud and Shari served as members of the Board of Directors from 1997 to 2002. Bud served as Vice President from 1997 – 2000, and was named Member of the Year in 1997 and again in 2003.


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Mrs. Zenona Hoffman Biography (Silver Star Preservation Class Profile Car 1987 300SDL)

By Kenny Hoffman

(Editor's note: This issue contains Kenny Hoffman's 300SDL profile, his mother was the first owner of the car, reading Mrs. Hoffman's biography before the profile of the car will give readers a better understanding of car's importance for Kenny.)

Mom never drove cars, but she bought them. She attempted to learn to drive when she lived on the farm in Okeene, OK, but the process just made her much too nervous. She decided that everyone was just better off if she was not behind the steering wheel. While she didn't want or need a new car often, she did like one that was dependable.

My mother, Zenona Babenko-Hoffman, was born in 1926 to Pavel & Anna Babenko in Buczucz, Poland. Although Buczucz then belonged to the Republic of Poland, it was an ethnically Ukrainian town. It reverted to the Ukrainian S.S.R. at the close of WWII and is now in the Republic of Ukraine. Zenona's family owned farms in the soil rich lands of lower Ukraine. When Stalin's government policies started to collectivize privately owned farms, the rightful owners were removed by bullets or sent to starve and freeze in Siberia. The entire family, including grandparents, was sentenced to the frozen east. A daring plan was made to try and escape. Pavel was first and secured train passage back to Ukraine. Anna went later, packing Zenona and her two siblings in an old empty pickle barrel, which then was placed in the baggage car. With bribes made to the train officials

Anna freed the children after the train was rolling. Although the home and farms were long gone, the family settled in Mariupol Ukraine. When Zenona was only fourteen, the Germans invaded her hometown and proceeded to terrorize and even slaughter its' inhabitants. The Nazi forces took Zenona into captivity, and she spent the next four years in a forced labor camp in Germany.

Life was extremely harsh. Starvation was always present. British forces liberated her labor camp in 1945 and Zenona, like hundreds of thousands of others at the time was left a refugee in war-torn Europe.

As a displaced person, she could not return to home. The Soviets were stopping all trains with returning captives, having them all executed as traitors. With the help of a local priest, she had new personal documents made with a new name.

She somehow made her way to France and was fortunate enough to get a job working in a hospital. There she met a friendly American soldier by the name of Clarence Hoffman. Clarence, an electrician by trade, ran the local military power plant. At the time, the young Zenona spoke Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, German and French, but not a solitary word of English. Clarence, though, was from a German-American family in Okeene, and was fluent in German. As a result, the two were able to converse. Clarence was kind to Zenona, he shared his rations with her and bought a pair of shoes for her then bare feet. The young couple courted and fell in love. They were married in Marseille in 1945, first in an English military ceremony and then in a French civil ceremony. They honeymooned in Nice. With the war behind them, they settled in Clarence's native Oklahoma in 1946. They farmed in Clarence's hometown of Okeene until 1951. They then moved into eastern Oklahoma County and proceeded to raise three children. The Hoffmans had the Peebly Road home custom-built in 1962. Zenona, a natural with languages, slowly became fluent in English. She was naturalized as a full U.S. citizen in 1970, thus fulfilling a lifelong dream.

In 1982, Zenona bought her first Mercedes, a blue 240 D, with stick shift. After several years of ownership, the mighty 240D was involved in an accident. Zenona was trapped inside with multiple injuries. While recovering later, it was then necessary to purchase another automobile. The 1987 300SDL was located at Benchmark Motors in Oklahoma City and bought.

In 1988, Zenona received information that her sister, Raisa, might still be alive behind the Iron Curtain. Zenona had always assumed that her sister had died during WWII or its aftermath. The family here zealously researched the matter, and found that, in fact, Raisa was still very much alive and residing in the Ukraine (formerly the Ukrainian S.S.R.). Clarence and Zenona arranged to have Raisa brought to the United States for a very happy reunion in 1991. Raisa and her husband Nicolai stayed in Oklahoma for 3 months before returning home. The 300SDL served as comfortable transportation during those months. In 2007, with declining driving skills, Clarence parked the Benz in his garage.

They are all gone now. Zenona passed in 2010, with Clarence following in 2013.

She had lived through the horrors of two of the world's worst dictators, and escaped them both. My mother had three main goals in her long and fulfilling life: to have her children born in the United States of America, to become a citizen of the United States, and to die in her beloved adopted home. She achieved all three.

I acquired the car in 2010, with 87,000 miles showing on the odometer. Many repairs were needed to get it back to driving condition again. In recognition of the restoration, the Central Oklahoma Section awarded the Silver Star Preservation Award Certificate and Grill Badge at the June 2013 dinner meeting at Ingrid's Kitchen in Oklahoma City.



Silver Star Preservation Class Profile Car, 1987 300SDL Owned by Ken Hoffman

By Ken Hoffman and Masood Khan



Ken acquired his 300SDL from his parents, Clarence and Zenona Hoffman in the early months of 2010. At the time with Clarence Hoffman's (Ken's dad) driving skills declining, 300SDL was sitting in the garage for almost three years. Mr. Hoffman realizing car was just too big for him to handle preferred his small pickup.

When Dad asked Ken to have the car he initially declined citing lack of room because of his existing car collection. But after a few nights

of thinking Ken decided to have it. The biggest motivation for Ken to accept the car as a gift was Mrs. Hoffman's rapidly declining health, the fact that this was the last car she had purchased and his desire to keep the car in the family at the time, the car had 87,000 miles on the odometer and though it was in a great condition it needed some TLC.

After getting the keys to the Benz, the first order of business was a new battery following a change of all fluids. Over the next several months, the car spent time at Circle Star Import Repair Shop, south of Harrah OK. New heater valve, hoses, belts, repair of A/C leak and refilling with the original R-12 Freon. And a dome light repair that was the cause of a battery drain problem. Several glow plugs and transmission cooler hoses were replaced and a new radiator was installed. Brake pads and front discs were replaced. A new radio with a CD player, and a new power antenna were installed. New chrome wheels and tires were installed. A new interior temperature control unit was installed, and several vacuum hose leaks behind the dash control panel were repaired. The fuel injector pump was repaired and fuel hose leaks were fixed. The car had a full four-wheel alignment, and all wheel bearings were repacked. Other repairs were made as and when they presented themselves.

In the months after Kenny's mother's passing, his dad was no longer able to care for himself. They were married for more than 64 years, and she was everything for him. With her gone, he went to a nursing home for the last 3 years of his life. Kenny had the responsibility of selling off their property including the house and land. The 300SDL made most of the trips out to Harrah to oversee the project. In the 2 years it took to sell it all off Kenny added an additional 20,000 miles on the car.

Nowadays, the car is driven sparingly, mostly to the Benz club meetings or the occasional estate sale or grocery run. It's driven enough to keep all systems running, but not enough to burden it's age. The odometer currently is showing 109,600 miles.

In recognition of the restoration, the Central Oklahoma Section awarded the Silver Star Preservation Award Certificate and Grill Badge to Kenny at the June 2013 dinner meeting at Ingrid's Kitchen in Oklahoma City.



FOOD BANK VOLUNTEERISM OPPORTUNITY

This year's half day is scheduled for Saturday, November 8th. The group from COJA and MBCA will work from 9:00 a.m. to noon. If you have never volunteered before, you are encouraged to do so. The variety of work ranges from boxing up pantry items for the senior homebound community to packaging frozen carrots in 2-pound bags or packaging rice in 2-pound bags to go to schools, nursing homes, etc.

If you are interested in participating with the joint Car Club group, please go to www.regionalfoodbank.org to register online. If you should have any problems (after you have watched the registration tutorial), you can contact Sarah Baxter at (405) 794-9279 or you can call the Food Bank at (405) 600-3161 and they can walk you thru the registration process. **Also:** Be sure to let us know if you will be staying with the Group for lunch.

Plan to be at the Food Bank by 8:45 a.m. to sign in. It is located at 3355 S. Purdue (If you haven't been there before and need directions, please call Sarah on Friday, November 7th). For more about the Food Bank, visit their website www.regionalfoodbank.org. They do an incredible amount of good for the State of Oklahoma in fighting hunger. Volunteers will work until noon, and then gather at for lunch at a nearby restaurant.

What: Workday at the Regional Food Bank

Date: Saturday, November 8th

Time: 9:00 am to Noon (plan to arrive by 8:45 a.m. to sign in)

Cost: Only what you order for lunch afterwards.

Questions: Call Sarah Baxter at 794-9279 after 6:00 pm on weekdays.

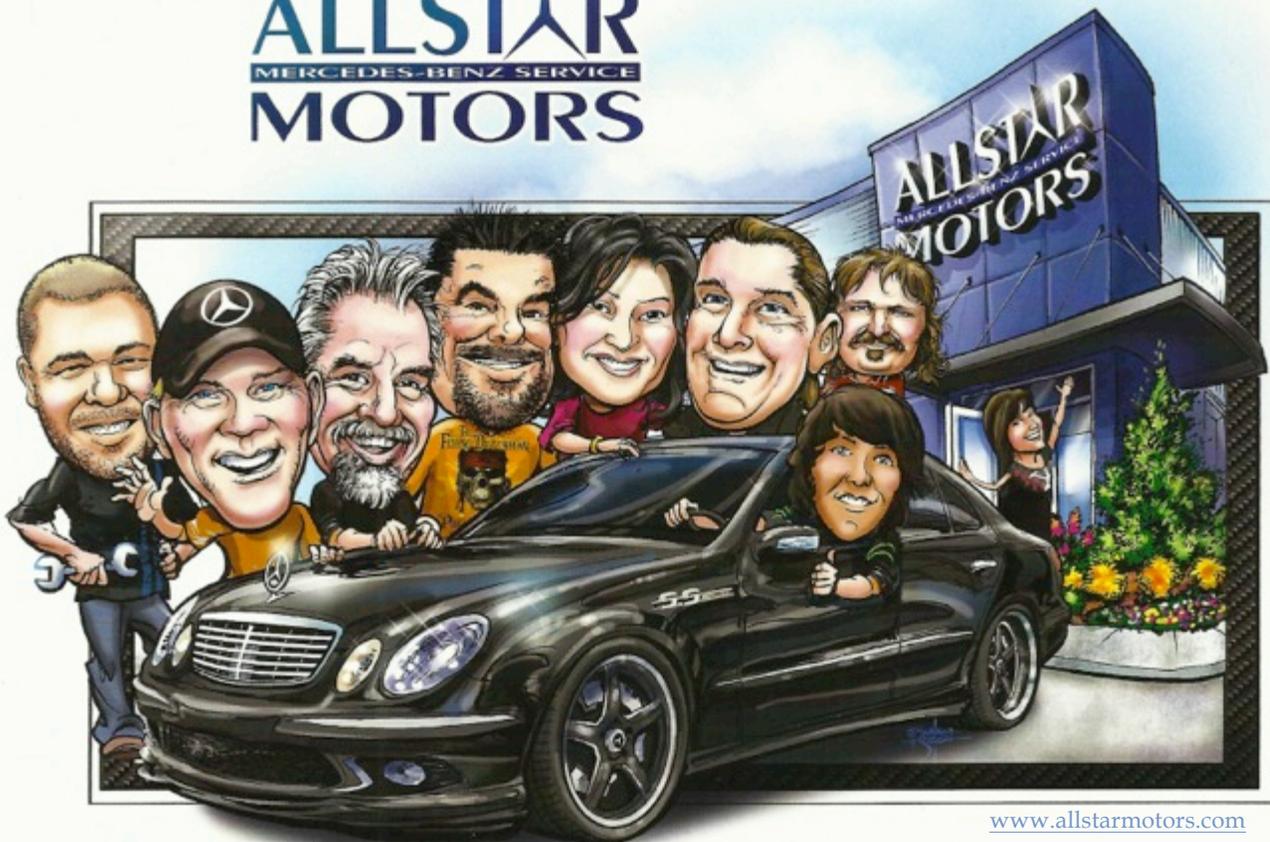
2014 Calendar of Events

October Dinner Meeting, Tuesday Oct. 21st, Showing of New C and GLA models at MBOKC followed by Dinner at Hideaway Pizza 900 N. Broadway. Food Bank Volunteering, Saturday, November 8th.

November Dinner Meeting, Tuesday November 18th, at Mimi's Café, W. Memorial Road, OKC.

Annual Christmas Party, Tuesday, December 16th. At Petroleum Club, 100 N. Broadway.

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2014 MBCA Mercedes-Benz Stuttgart, Germany Tour

By Charles Woods

The first of two 2014 MBCA tours to Stuttgart, Germany occurred July 28 – August 3. John and Jane Crain and I were among the 34 MBCA members from around the country who experienced this terrific opportunity – a week of all things Mercedes-Benz.

Day One I arrived a day early to overcome any jet lag. Our first day was mostly day on our own, and I used it to visit some of the many shops and stores along Koenigsstrasse, Stuttgart's main pedestrian shopping street and took a double decker bus tour of the beautiful city. Our first official event was our kickoff dinner that evening at our hotel, the Maritim. We met our tour hosts, Jim O'Sullivan, past MBCA president and Wolfram Korner, retired Daimler executive. By the end of the evening, the group had already begun to bond and I knew this would prove to be a special week.



Day Two started with a Mercedes-Benz motor coach taking us to Stickel Pagoda Center, outside Stuttgart. Stickel is an internationally recognized top independent restoration facility specializing in 1963-71 W113 – 230SL, 250SL, 280SL, (Pagodas). We were able to visit with the owner, Mr. Joachim Stickel, his technicians, tour 113s in various stages of restoration and also inspect his 113 inventory for sale. For a 113 lover such as me, it was quite a treat.

Second stop was for lunch/tour at Meilenwerk Classic Car Complex, a unique classic car facility and consisting of classic car showrooms and storage, housed in the hangers and terminal of a former airport near Stuttgart.

Next stop was the Mercedes-Benz manufacturing facility at Sindelfingen. Saying Sindelfingen is a large facility is a definite understatement because facility footprint is larger than the entire principality of Monaco. A Mercedes-Benz representative from the Center of Excellence introduced us to the European Delivery Center and Center of Excellence. After that we toured the stamping plant and observed various sheet metal parts and panels being pressed from flat steel through various stages to final finished part. Later we viewed section where the stamping die casts are formed. Our final stop was the assembly line of the S-Class. Unlike the stamping plant, the assembly requires the human touch and teams of workers assemble the vehicles as they proceed down the line however robots perform all heavy lifting.



Day Three started with a visit to the AMG headquarters and facilities at Affalterbach. Unlike Sindelfingen, AMG is a small facility comprised of half dozen or so medium sized buildings in a nondescript light industrial section of Stuttgart. We began with a visit to the custom shop where individualized specifications of the AMG customers are fulfilled. Next stop was the engine assembly building. As many may know, each AMG engine is hand assembled by a single technician. We observed this process where each technician is quietly and methodically working at a single station bringing an engine to completion, including the technician's signature on the engine.

2014 MBCA Stuttgart, Germany Tour continued....



Several of our tour Members, who brought photographs of their AMG engine met with their technician and had a photograph with him at a special location.

After a brief visit to Gottlieb Daimler's birth house we traveled to Fellbach where retired Daimler executive Guenther Baurle gave us a personal tour of the Mercedes-Benz Classic Center. The highlight of our restoration shop tour was opportunity to see the recently completed 1938 540K Streamliner which was uncovered just for us. It was to be transported the next morning to Monterey, California for the 2014 Pebble Beach Concours

d'Elegance. We were told no expense was spared in restoring this priceless one-of-a-kind historic aluminum bodied vehicle.

Day Four began at the Mercedes-Benz Museum and Brand Center in Stuttgart. Photographs belie the architecture and scale of this beautiful facility. The entirety of the automotive history of Mercedes-Benz is captured in the 8 levels of this beautiful building. The museum is designed as a double helix and visitors proceed down ramps and see vehicles through the years. My personal favorite was the 1955 Uhlenhaut SLR.

Before lunch (for reasons that became obvious) we assembled outside the Museum and met a special Mercedes-Benz bus which took us to the nearby Mercedes-Benz test track. We enjoyed private access to the track and personal rides by test drivers in four different vehicles; a C63 AMG Coupe, an S-Class 550 Coupe, a 350 S Class Diesel Sedan and a G-Wagon. What an experience! From doing multiple 360°s without ESP on the rain pad in the C63 to taking the top of the 90° bank curve it was great fun. The big surprise was after getting back into our bus was our driver took the bus on the track, including the 90° curve - hands-free – twice! Great fun. Last leg of the tour was Bad Cannstatt Engine Plant, where over 5,000/day are manufactured.

Day Five our last full day, started at Sinsheim, near Heidelberg at Sinsheim Auto & Technik Museum. The museum covers more than 300,000 square feet of indoor and in open-air space. From an Air France CONCORDE, Russian Tupolev TU-144 to more than 300 classic cars (mostly Mercedes-Benz), locomotives, motorcycles, to the largest the largest permanent Formula-1 exhibition in Europe it is all there. The day ended with a stop at the Carl Benz Museum in Mannheim, a privately owned facility operated in cooperation with Daimler-Benz. Prior to our departure, our group posed for a group photo with our bus driver.

Day Six was on our own but we met in the evening for our farewell dinner. The overall experience definitely exceeded my expectations. Jim and Wolfram were the best of hosts and guides and if anything went awry, it was well taken care of outside the group's awareness. The Maritim Hotel, although 550 rooms, had the ambiance of a boutique hotel and the breakfast buffet was designed to impress. I do not do group trips and was not looking forward to this aspect of the trip. I happily confess the group was itself, one of the trip's highlights. As MBCA members and Mercedes owners, we had common interests and we became a rolling party. No surprise dinner each night was a 3-hour affair of good food and better conversation. If you love the Mercedes-Benz marque, I heartily recommend this tour. You will not be disappointed.



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220S Ponton Cabriolet Restoration Part VI

By Charles Boyd

Everything is progressing nicely. Except for a small exhaust leak, which needs to be welded, the engine bay and engine is complete. Most of the priming and blocking is well under way. Perfection is very difficult to attain but we are coming very close. The door seams, fender seams and the hood and trunk seams are fitting well.

We are presently working on hand fitting the exterior chrome trim. This trim is presently in brass, which can be bent, twisted and fitted without permanent damage. After it is properly fitted, it will be sent to chrome plating after which it cannot be modified without damaging the chrome finish. This sounds like a rather simple procedure but considering some of the brass is after market that was made in China, it is a matter of almost, perfect but not quite fit.

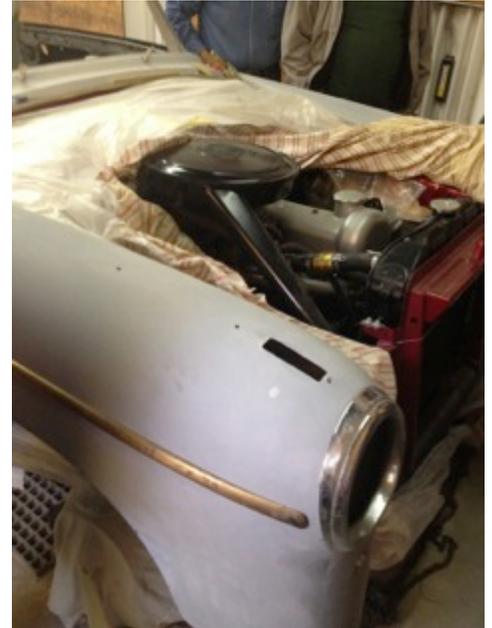
The 220S was one of the last models built by Mercedes that was hand built. This particular car has the distinction of having been hand built twice.

All of the rubber seals, interior carpet, seat upholstery and side panel upholstery are waiting to be installed. The interior wood is still occupying a safe storage area under the bed in one of our guest rooms.

I anticipate the paint to go on in about thirty days. Since it makes such an outstanding show finish, I have decided to go for base coat, clear coat paint. This finish gives more freedom in working to perfection after it is applied than does a single stage enamel.

I was able to find a windshield for less than a thousand dollars so I bought two of them (one is for my coupe when we find time to work on it).

I am getting anxious to see it all go together quickly but experience has taught me that indeed, "haste makes waste" so I will try to contain my anxiety.



Editor's Note



Start by doing what's necessary; then do what's possible; and suddenly you are doing the impossible. -Saint Francis of Assisi

Board of Director's election was necessary to make it possible to have new Directors and New officers, now we are starting the impossible; how to improve an already great section?

While you are enjoying the newsletter a number of your section leaders are working hard to efficiently run the section. Four years back I had no idea how much work was involved in running the affairs of this section. Once I became section secretary it dawned on me it takes some very serious work to manage this section of 150 Members.

I want to offer gratitude to all the Section Leaders past and present including the out going President Jack Finks, Vice President Paul Rodesney. Special Thanks to Ken Wells who vacated his seat to let fresh talent on the Board, to all the candidates who participated in the election and to all of you who voted in the election. Last but not least thanks to the Nomination Committee Chair Peggy Kirk, Members Mathew Haire and David McLendon for their work.

Have a colorful fall.

Masood Khan.

Sooner Star News
October/November 2014

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